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5th May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I do hope that you continue to remain safe and well.

There have been a number of press articles speculating when and how schools will start to re-open when the current restrictions are eventually eased. The next review of the existing 'lockdown' rules is Sunday 10 May, and more information about this may be released at that time. In the meantime, school continues to remain open to the children of key workers and some vulnerable students.

We have been able to share our concerns/issues/possible solutions in relation to re-opening with the Local Authority and when schools reopen, we will need to ensure our plan follows the most recent advice and takes into account the needs of our whole community.

We are now in week 7 of partial school closure, and I am very grateful to all our staff who are very keen to support our learners, and our fantastic key workers, during this incredibly difficult time.

As you will no doubt be aware, school is closed this Friday for Bank Holiday and also to commemorate VE Day. As ever we are at the mercy of the great British weather, but currently the forecast looks good and I look forward to receiving any photographs of you enjoying a 'socially distanced' pic-nic or street party in celebration of this important date in our history.

In the meantime, I attach a letter from the Department of Health & Social Care and an update from Lancashire Education Authority. I hope you find some of the information useful.

Please contact school via the office telephone, or by emailing office@theviewtrust.org if you would like to discuss any of the points raised.

With best wishes,

Mrs L A Parrish
Headteacher

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What parents and carers need to know about schools, colleges and other education settings during the coronavirus outbreak (Updated 1 May)

3.1 Can parents appeal if a school has refused them a place? (New)

Yes, we have amended the regulations so that admission authorities can hold appeals by telephone, video conference or in writing, where necessary, instead of holding face to face hearings with parents. More information on the [appeals process](#) is available.

5.1 If my child is eligible for free school meals, will they still receive a meal or food voucher while the school is closed? (Updated)

Yes. Under normal circumstances, schools are not expected to provide free school meals to eligible children who are not attending due to illness or if the school is closed. However, during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak we expect schools to continue to provide support to these children if the school is only open for certain groups or closed.

Headteachers can decide which of the available options will be best for families in their area. We encourage schools to work with their suppliers to arrange food parcels or collections for families eligible for free school meals. Where this is not possible, a national scheme was launched for schools to provide supermarket vouchers. Contact your school to find out what they are providing. More [information on support for pupils eligible for school meals](#) is available.

We expect further education institutions to continue to support students who are eligible for, and usually receive, free meals in further education, or are newly eligible, whether they are continuing to attend the provider or are studying remotely due to coronavirus (COVID-19) related issues. Institutions should continue to provide that support as they determine the most appropriate and practical actions, for example, providing vouchers for supermarkets or local shops, making payments by BACS, or other local arrangements. 16 to 19 colleges and other providers can also access the school voucher scheme described above where needed.

Removed from the advice in Sections 6 & 7 covering places for Critical Workers and Vulnerable Children: Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading (*whilst the guidance continues to make it clear that attendance "an offer" and "recommended", rather than compulsory*).

8.1 What support is available to parents to help them educate their children at home and to access children's social care services? (Updated to also include)

Other available support includes:

- guidance to [help primary school children continue their education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)
- an online resource from [Oak National Academy](#) with daily lessons available to both primary and secondary pupils (your child's school is best placed to advise you regarding whether to use the academy alongside their existing offer)

8.2 My child qualifies for a device and connectivity at home but I don't know how to apply for one. How can I do this? (Updated)

Laptops, tablets and 4G routers will be sent to schools and children's social care teams. They will contact you once they have the devices to let you know how to access them.

If you / your child is aged 16 to 19 you should contact your college, school, or other provider around accessing similar support if you need it.

8.5 What advice is available to parents with children aged 4 to 11, to help them support their children's education at home? (New)

We have published [guidance for parents of primary school children regarding supporting the continuation of education at home](#). This includes advice and guidance around:

- structuring the day
- use of digital devices
- language development
- reading and writing
- numeracy
- information tailored to each age group
- information for those with children reaching the end of primary school

This guidance is designed to complement support and advice provided by schools and teachers. Engaging with your child's learning will be helpful in their continued educational development. For example, something as simple as talking to them during the day about what they are doing for school, or about anything around the home, enhances learning.

8.7 Is my child at additional risk while spending more time online? (New)

With children spending more time online to do schoolwork and other activities, there could be an additional risk. This is why it is more important than ever that children, parents and carers know how to stay safe online.

It is important that parents and carers talk to their children about online safety, show an interest in what they are doing online and ask what they like and dislike about the apps and services they use. Discuss age appropriate 'ground rules' like how much time they spend online doing different things and what games and apps are appropriate to use. Also consider setting up and reviewing age appropriate parental controls. Setting parental controls can be a quick and effective tool to help protect children online.

8.8 Where can I go to get support to help keep my child safe online? (Updated)

There is support available to keep your child safe online. You can access [further information on keeping children safe online](#).

Here are some useful links to help parents and carers.

- [Thinkuknow](#) provides advice from the National Crime Agency (NCA) to stay safe online
- to help families manage during this time, the NCA has launched [Thinkuknow: home activity packs](#), a set of fun, engaging activities based on Thinkuknow cartoons, films, games, and advice articles
- a new activity sheet for each age group will be published on the [Thinkuknow](#) website every 2 weeks while schools are closed - these activities offer a great opportunity to help you keep up positive, supportive conversations about online safety in your home
- [Parent Info](#) is a collaboration between Parentzone and the NCA providing support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations
- [Childnet](#) provides a tool kit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- [Internet Matters](#) provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- [LGfL](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including 6 top tips to keep primary aged children safe online
- [Net Aware](#) provides support for parents and carers from the NSPCC, providing a guide to social networks, apps and games
- [Let's Talk About It](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) provides tips, advice, guides and resources to help keep children safe online, including parental controls offered by home internet providers and safety tools on social networks and other online services
- [staying safe online](#) provides government guidance offering advice on parental controls, fact-checking information, communicating with family and friends while social distancing is in place and taking regular break